

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a network, a method for provisioning services comprising:

receiving a user selection of one or more services that have been deemed to be

5 available to the user via the network;

receiving registration information from the user including billing information and
a user identifier;

authenticating the user identifier with an ISP;

communicating the user identifier to each provider of a selected service; and

10 communicating the registration information and information representative of
each selected service to a billing engine;

whereafter a user may access each service and be billed appropriately for usage.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising retrieving from a product catalog

15 the one or more services available to a user.

3. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising using a broadband access type to
determine which services to retrieve from the product catalog.

20 4. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of determining if a
physical location or address is capable of receiving broadband service before allowing a
user to select any services.

5. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of registering the user with a provisioning manager which is responsible for determining if any discrete services are needed by the user to permit access to any select service.

5 6. A system for aggregating product offerings from multiple network and service providers and managing the purchase of any offerings by end customers, comprising:

a catalog of offerings available to end subscribers from multiple providers organized into an aggregated plan for presentation to the subscriber, the product catalog tracking rating guidelines and financial reconciliation rules between providers;

10 a rating engine for processing usage events that originate from providers which usage events summarize data indicative of customer use of offerings across the multiple providers, wherein the rating engine reconciles between the multiple providers based on the rating guidelines and financial reconciliation rules in the product catalog for use in billing the end customer and reconciling payments to the providers; and

15 a provisioning subsystem responsible for provisioning and de-provisioning offerings with the providers, the provisioning subsystem using information in the product catalog to create a series of provisioning events that are relayed to the providers which allow the provider to register a purchase of an offering by the end customer with the provider, track customer usage of the offerings, and, in response to the usage, create
20 usage events for processing by the rating engine.

7. The system as recited in claim 6, comprising a standardized interface to allow providers to develop connections to the product catalog and to transact with other providers.

8. The system as recited in claim 6, comprising an IP address rules server tracking the assignment of IP address subnets across the offerings to thereby provide customer access to the offerings.

5 9. A computer-readable media having instructions for provisioning services, the instructions performing steps comprising:

receiving a user selection of one or more services that have been deemed to be available to the user via the network;

10 receiving registration information from the user including billing information and a user identifier;

authenticating the user identifier with an ISP;

communicating the user identifier to each provider of a selected service; and

communicating the registration information and information representative of each selected service to a billing engine;

15 whereafter a user may access each service and be billed appropriately for usage.

10. A method for provisioning services in a broadband network, comprising:

receiving a query message from a customer requesting access to the broadband network from a given location;

20 determining if broadband network access is available to the customer at the given location; and

if broadband network access is available to the potential customer, querying a product catalog to determine offerings available for the access requested; allowing the

customer to selected one or more of the offerings for purchase; receiving an identifier from the customer; provisioning the selected offerings from providers of the selected offerings; and synchronizing the identifier received from the customer with the providers of the selected offerings and a rating and billing engine.

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11. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the query message is received via an ISP Web site.

10 12. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the query message is received via a provider order entry system.

13. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the query message includes information descriptive of a client computer which will be used to access the broadband network.

15 14. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the query message is received via a customer service representative system.

15. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining if network access is available comprises determining if the given location is passed by a branch of a
20 physical line within the broadband network.

16. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining if network access is available comprises determining if the given location is capable of receiving wireless communications from a transmission mode in the broadband network.

5 17. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the step of determining if network access is available comprises determining a relative priority of the customer versus that of other customers.

10 18. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the product catalog includes rating guidelines for the offerings for use in billing the customer for accessing selected offerings.

15 19. The method as recited in claim 10, further comprising allocating IP addresses to facilitate access to the broadband network.

20 20. A method for rating usage of services in a broadband network, comprising:

receiving a request to provide a customer with access to broadband services each provided by a respective service provider;

storing a universal customer identifier in a database associated with a billing engine and associating the universal customer identifier with the broadband services;

synchronizing a local customer identifier at each of the respective service providers with the universal customer identifier;

receiving usage information from the respective service providers pertaining to usage by the customer of the service supported by the respective service provider; and using the usage information and the customer identifier in connection with billing engine to generate a bill corresponding to the usage of the services by the customer.

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21. A computer readable media having instructions for provisioning services in a broadband network, the instructions performing steps comprising:

receiving a query message from a customer requesting access to the broadband network from a given location;

10 determining if broadband network access is available to the customer at the given location; and

if broadband network access is available to the potential customer, querying a product catalog to determine offerings available for the access requested; allowing the customer to selected one or more of the offerings for purchase; receiving an identifier
15 from the customer; provisioning the selected offerings from providers of the selected offerings; and synchronizing the identifier received from the customer with the providers of the selected offerings and a rating and billing engine.

22. A computer readable media having instructions for rating usage of services in a
20 broadband network, the instructions performing steps comprising:

receiving a request to provide a customer with access to broadband services each provided by a respective service provider;

storing a universal customer identifier in a database associated with a billing engine and associating the universal customer identifier with the broadband services;

synchronizing a local customer identifier at each of the respective service providers with the universal customer identifier;

- 5 receiving usage information from the respective service providers pertaining to usage by the customer of the service supported by the respective service provider; and
- using the usage information and the customer identifier in connection with billing engine to generate a bill corresponding to the usage of the services by the customer.

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